

H. Res. 287

In the House of Representatives, U. S.,

July 11, 2007.

Whereas Italian navigator Amerigo Vespucci was born in 1454 and traveled across the Atlantic Ocean 4 times between 1497 and 1504;

Whereas during his second voyage to the Western Hemisphere in 1499, Amerigo Vespucci realized that the land Christopher Columbus discovered in 1492 was not India but a new continent;

Whereas cartographer Martin Waldseemüller, a member of the research group Gymnasium Vosagense in Saint-Dié, France, first used the word “America” in his world map, which first appeared in public on April 25, 1507, and described the newly discovered Western Hemisphere as separated by the Atlantic Ocean and an ocean known now as the Pacific Ocean, in its first depiction;

Whereas Waldseemüller chose to honor Amerigo Vespucci by naming the new continent with Vespucci’s name even while Vespucci was alive;

Whereas Waldseemüller described this decision in his “Cosmographiae Introductio”, the book that accompanied the map, by writing, “I see no reason why anyone should justly object to calling this part ... America, after

Amerigo [Vespucci], its discoverer, a man of great ability.”; and

Whereas April 25, 2007, will be the 500th anniversary of this first public use of the word “America”, which now serves as the root of the names of 2 continents: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) celebrates the 500th anniversary of the first use of the name “America” to describe areas in the Western Hemisphere;

(2) honors the explorations of Amerigo Vespucci and other navigators who contributed to the discovery of the Western Hemisphere;

(3) acknowledges the significance of Martin Waldseemüller’s 1507 map of the world and accompanying book, “Cosmographiae Introductio”, which forever changed the accepted geographical view of the world and first officially used the name “America”; and

(4) encourages the inhabitants of all countries of the Western Hemisphere who have the privilege to share this great name “America” to join with the House of

Representatives and citizens of the United States of
America in this historic celebration.

Attest:

Clerk.